Religion

Main article: Censorship by religion

Censorship by religion is a form of censorship where freedom of expression is controlled or limited using religious authority or on the basis of the teachings of the religion. This form of censorship has a long history and is practiced in many societies and by many religions. Examples include the Galileo affair, Edict of Compiègne, the Index Librorum Prohibitorum (list of prohibited books) and the condemnation of Salman Rushdie's novel *The Satanic Verses* by Iranian leader Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini. Images of the Islamic figure Muhammad are also regularly censored.

Educational sources
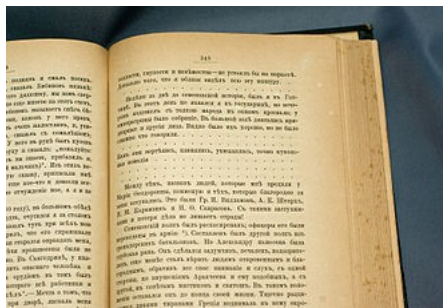
Historic Russian censorship. Book "Notes of my life by N.I. Grech", published in St. Petersburg 1886 by A.S. Suvorin. The censored text was replaced by dots.

The content of school textbooks is often the issue of debate, since their target audience is young people, and the term "whitewashing" is the one commonly used to refer to removal of critical or conflicting events. The reporting of military atrocities in history is extremely controversial, as in the case of The Holocaust (or Holocaust denial), Bombing of Dresden, the Nanking Massacre as found with Japanese history textbook controversies, the Armenian Genocide, the Tiananmen Square protests of 1989, and the Winter Soldier Investigation of the Vietnam War.

In the context of secondary school education, the way facts and history are presented greatly influences the interpretation of contemporary thought, opinion and socialization. One argument for censoring the type of information disseminated is based on the inappropriate quality of such material for the young. The use of the "inappropriate" distinction is in itself controversial, as it changed heavily. A Ballantine Books version of the book Fahrenheit 451 which is the version used by most school classes[20] contained approximately 75 separate edits, omissions, and changes from the original Bradbury manuscript.

In February 2006 a *National Geographic* cover was censored by the Nashravaran Journalistic Institute. The offending cover was about the subject of love and a picture of an embracing couple was hidden beneath a white sticker.[21][21]

Copy, picture, and writer approval

Copy approval is the right to read and amend an article, usually an interview, before publication. Many publications refuse to give copy approval but it is increasingly becoming common practice when dealing with publicity anxious celebrities.[22] Picture approval is the right given to an individual to choose which photos will be published and which will not. Robert Redford is well known for insisting upon picture approval.[23] Writer approval is when writers are chosen based on whether they will write flattering articles or not. Hollywood publicist Pat Kingsley is known for banning certain writers who wrote undesirably about one of her clients from interviewing any of her other clients.[*citation needed*]

Creative censorship

There are many ways that censors exhibit creativity, but a specific variant is of concern in which censors rewrite texts, giving these texts secret co-authors. This form of censorship is discussed in George Orwell's novel *Nineteen Eighty-Four*.[*citation needed*][*original research?*]

Self-censorship

Author Ozzie Zehner self-censored the American edition of his environmental book, *Green Illusions*,[24] due to food libel laws that enable the food industry to sue researchers who criticize their products.
Main article: Self-censorship

According to a Pew Research Center and the *Columbia Journalism Review* survey, "About one-quarter of the local and national journalists say they have purposely avoided newsworthy stories, while nearly as many acknowledge they have softened the tone of stories to benefit the interests

of their news organizations. Fully four-in-ten (41%) admit they have engaged in either or both of these practices."[25]

Censorship by medium

Books

Main article: Book censorship

Nazi book burning in Berlin, May 1933.

Book censorship can be enacted at the national or sub-national level, and can carry legal penalties for their infraction. Books may also be challenged at a local, community level. As a result, books can be removed from schools or libraries, although these bans do not extend outside of that area.

Films

Main article: Film censorship

Aside from the usual justifications of pornography and obscenity, some films are censored due to changing racial attitudes or political correctness in order to avoid ethnic stereotyping and/or ethnic offense despite its historical or artistic value. One example is the still withdrawn "Censored Eleven" series of animated cartoons, which may have been innocent then, but are "incorrect" now.

Film censorship is carried out by various countries to differing degrees. For example, only 34 foreign films a year are approved for official distribution in China's strictly controlled film market.[26]

Music

Main article: Censorship of music

Music censorship has been implemented by states, religions, educational systems, families, retailers and lobbying groups – and in most cases they violate international conventions of human rights.[27]

Maps

Main article: [Censorship of maps](#)

Censorship of maps is often employed for military purposes. For example, the technique was used in former [East Germany](#), especially for the areas near the border to [West Germany](#) in order to make attempts of defection more difficult. Censorship of maps is also applied by [Google maps](#), where certain areas are grayed out or blacked or areas are purposely left outdated with old imagery.[28]

Individual words

Under subsection 48(3) and (4) of the [Penang](#) Islamic Religious Administration Enactment 2004, non-Muslims in [Malaysia](#) are penalized for using the following words, or to write or publish them, in any form, version or translation in any language or for use in any publicity material in any medium: *"Allah", "Firman Allah", "Ulama", "Hadith", "Ibadah", "Kaabah", "Qadhi'", "Illahi", "Wahyu", "Mubaligh", "Syariah", "Qiblat", "Haji", "Mufti", "Rasul", "Iman", "Dakwah", "Wali", "Fatwa", "Imam", "Nabi", "Sheikh", "Khutbah", "Tabligh", "Akhirat", "Azan", "Al Quran", "As Sunnah", "Auliya'", "Karamah", "Syahadah", "Baitullah", "Musolla", "Zakat Fitrah", "Hajjah", "Taqwa" and "Soleh".*[29][30][31]

Presumably, [Malaysian](#) non-Muslims cannot use these words even online, e.g. when editing [Wikipedia](#) articles.

Publishers of the Spanish reference dictionary [Real Acádemia Española](#) received petitions to censor the entries "Jewishness", "Gypsiness", "black work" and "weak sex", claiming that they are either offensive or non-PC.[32]

Internet

Main article: [Internet censorship](#)
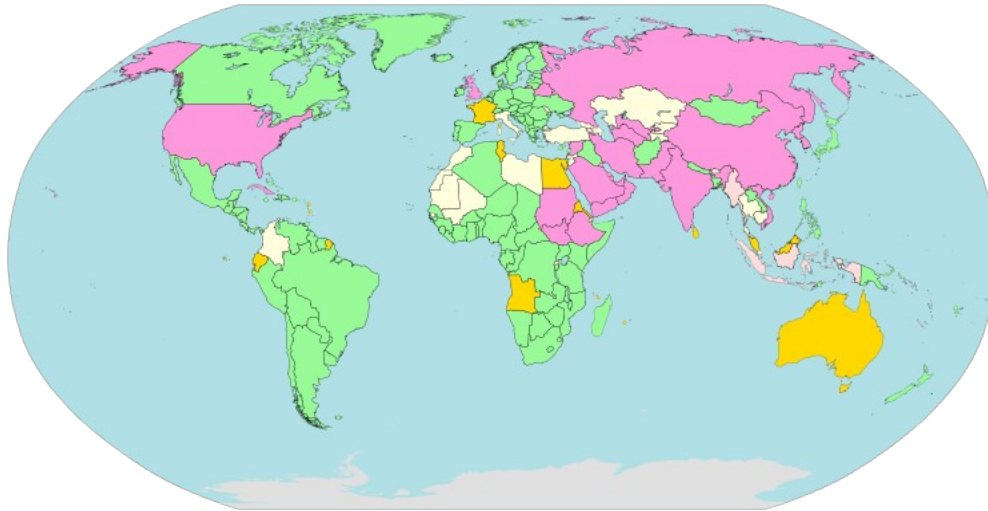
Internet censorship and surveillance by country[33][34][35][36]

Pervasive censorship		Changing situation	
Substantial censorship		Little or no censorship	
Selective censorship		Not classified / No data	

Internet censorship is control or suppression of the publishing or accessing of information on the Internet. It may be carried out by governments or by private organizations either at the behest of government or on their own initiative. Individuals and organizations may engage in self-censorship on their own or due to intimidation and fear.

The issues associated with Internet censorship are similar to those for offline censorship of more traditional media. One difference is that national borders are more permeable online: residents of a country that bans certain information can find it on websites hosted outside the country. Thus censors must work to prevent access to information even though they lack physical or legal control over the websites themselves. This in turn requires the use of technical censorship methods that are unique to the Internet, such as site blocking and content filtering.[37]

Unless the censor has total control over all Internet-connected computers, such as in North Korea or Cuba, total censorship of information is very difficult or impossible to achieve due to the underlying distributed technology of the Internet. Pseudonymity and data havens (such as Freenet) protect free speech using technologies that guarantee material cannot be removed and prevents the identification of authors. Technologically savvy users can often find ways to access blocked content. Nevertheless, blocking remains an effective means of limiting access to sensitive information for most users when censors, such as those in China, are able to devote significant resources to building and maintaining a comprehensive censorship system.[37]

Views about the feasibility and effectiveness of Internet censorship have evolved in parallel with the development of the Internet and censorship technologies:

- A 1993 *Time Magazine* article quotes computer scientist John Gillmore, one of the founders of the Electronic Frontier Foundation, as saying "The Net interprets censorship as damage and routes around it."[38]
- In November 2007, "Father of the Internet" Vint Cerf stated that he sees government control of the Internet failing because the Web is almost entirely privately owned.[39]
- A report of research conducted in 2007 and published in 2009 by the Beckman Center for Internet & Society at Harvard University stated that: "We are confident that the [censorship circumvention] tool developers will for the most part keep ahead of the governments' blocking efforts", but also that "...we believe that less than two percent of all filtered Internet users use circumvention tools".[40]
- In contrast, a 2011 report by researchers at the Oxford Internet Institute published by UNESCO concludes "... the control of information on the Internet and Web is certainly feasible, and technological advances do not therefore guarantee greater freedom of speech."[37]

A BBC World Service poll of 27,973 adults in 26 countries, including 14,306 Internet users,[41] was conducted between 30 November 2009 and 7 February 2010. The head of the polling organization felt, overall, that the poll showed that:

> Despite worries about privacy and fraud, people around the world see access to the internet as their fundamental right. They think the web is a force for good, and most don't want governments to regulate it.[42]

The poll found that nearly four in five (78%) Internet users felt that the Internet had brought them greater freedom, that most Internet users (53%) felt that "the internet should never be regulated by any level of government anywhere", and almost four in five Internet users and non-users around the world felt that access to the Internet was a fundamental right (50% strongly agreed, 29% somewhat agreed, 9% somewhat disagreed, 6% strongly disagreed, and 6% gave no opinion).[43]

Video games

Main articles: Video game censorship and List of regionally censored video games

Since the early 1980s, advocates of video games have emphasized their use as an [expressive medium](#), arguing for their protection under the laws governing [freedom of speech](#) and also as an educational tool. Detractors argue that video games are [harmful](#) and therefore should be [subject to legislative oversight and restrictions](#). Many video games have certain elements removed or edited due to [regional rating standards](#).[44][45]

Surveillance as an aid to censorship

See also: [Surveillance](#), [Mass surveillance](#) and [Computer and network surveillance](#)

Surveillance and censorship are different. Surveillance can be performed without censorship, but it is harder to engage in censorship without some form of surveillance.[46] And even when surveillance does not lead directly to censorship, the widespread knowledge or belief that a person, their computer, or their use of the Internet is under surveillance can lead to self-censorship.[47]

Protection of sources is no longer just a matter of journalistic ethics; it increasingly also depends on the journalist's computer skills and all journalists should equip themselves with a "digital survival kit" if they are exchanging sensitive information online or storing it on a computer or mobile phone.[48][49] And individuals associated with high profile rights organizations, dissident, protest, or reform groups are urged to take extra precautions to protect their online identities.[50]

Implementation
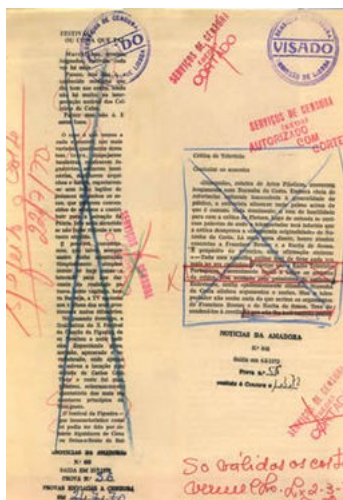
Censored pre-press proof of two articles from "[Notícias da Amadora](#)", a [Portuguese](#) newspaper, 1970

The former Soviet Union maintained a particularly extensive program of state-imposed censorship. The main organ for official censorship in the Soviet Union was the *Chief Agency for Protection of Military and State Secrets* generally known as the *Glavlit*, its Russian acronym. The *Glavlit* handled censorship matters arising from domestic writings of just about any kind—even beer and vodka labels. *Glavlit* censorship personnel were present in every large Soviet publishing house or newspaper; the agency employed some 70,000 censors to review information before it was disseminated by publishing houses, editorial offices, and broadcasting studios. No mass medium escaped *Glavlit*'s control. All press agencies and radio and television stations had *Glavlit* representatives on their editorial staffs.[*citation needed*]

Sometimes, public knowledge of the existence of a specific document is subtly suppressed, a situation resembling censorship. The authorities taking such action will justify it by declaring the work to be "subversive" or "inconvenient". An example is Michel Foucault's 1978 text "Sexual Morality and the Law" (later republished as "The Danger of Child Sexuality"), originally published as *La loi de la pudeur* [literally, "the law of decency"]. This work defends the decriminalization of statutory rape and the abolition of age of consent laws.[*citation needed*]

When a publisher comes under pressure to suppress a book, but has already entered into a contract with the author, they will sometimes effectively censor the book by deliberately ordering a small print run and making minimal, if any, attempts to publicize it. This practice became known in the early 2000s as *privishing* (**priv**ate publ**ishing**).[51]

Criticism of censorship

Censorship has been criticized throughout history for being unfair and hindering progress. In a 1997 essay on Internet censorship, social commentator Michael Landier claims that censorship is counterproductive as it prevents the censored topic from being discussed. Landier expands his argument by claiming that those who impose censorship must consider what they censor to be true, as individuals believing themselves to be correct would welcome the opportunity to disprove those with opposing views.[52]

Censorship is often used to impose moral values on society, as in the censorship of material considered obscene. English novelist E. M. Forster was a staunch opponent of censoring material on the grounds that it was obscene or immoral, raising the issue of moral subjectivity and the constant changing of moral values. In regard to the novel "Lady Chatterley's Lover" Forster wrote:[53]

'Lady Chatterley's Lover is a literary work of importance…I do not think that it could be held obscene, but am in a difficulty here, for the reason that I have never been able to follow the legal definition of obscenity. The law tells me that obscenity may deprave and corrupt, but as far as I know, it offers no definition of depravity or corruption.

Censorship by country

Main article: [Censorship by country](#)

Censorship by country collects information on censorship, [Internet censorship](#), [Freedom of the Press](#), [Freedom of speech](#), and [Human Rights](#) by country and presents it in a sortable table, together with links to articles with more information. In addition to countries, the table includes information on former countries, disputed countries, political sub-units within countries, and regional organizations.